Canadian Environmental Advisory Council | Conseil consultatif canadien de l'environnement

1984–85

Canadian Environmental Advisory Council

Review of Activities

Canada

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Canadian

Environmental

Advisory

Council

Enquiries concerning the work of the Council and requests for Council publications should be addressed to:

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CANADIAN ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY COUNCIL

The Canadian Environmental Advisory Council (CEAC) was perceived, at the time of its founding in 1972, as a means to promote communication and understanding among diverse interest groups in society, and between those groups and the Minister of the Environment. The practical means of implementing this role focused primarily of the provision of advice by the Council to the Minister of the Environment.

The role and manner of Council's operation which have evolved since that time under several ministers have reflected the original concepts, but have also enlarged on them and made them more specific.

Council today is a body representing a cross-section of Canadians who are knowledgeable and concerned about the environment including social and economic ramifications. It operates in a confidential advisory capacity to the Minister of the Environment, providing judgemental, considered opinion which reflects the viewpoints of a wide spectrum of the public. It provides the Minister with an alternative to the advice provided by the Department of the Environment and other federal agencies, and to the advice of specific interest groups.

It has been clear throughout Council's history that it was intended to serve as an advisory body to the Minister rather than as an organization with a high public profile, taking and promoting positions in public forums Council's public role, in terms of activities such as the publishing of reports, has therefore been secondary to its primary function of providing advice to the Minister of the Environment on a confidential basis. The public role has been played only when such action did not compromise but supported the main responsibility of advising the Minister.

The spirit in which Council operates is exemplified by the following statement which appeared in a 1981 description of the role of Council.

"Being neither a public interest group or an agent of any group, nor a part of the Department, but the Minister's advisory council reporting directly to him, the role of the Council is to speak as independently and forthrightly as possible. It is not simply to tell the Minister or the Department or the public of Canada pleasant, uncontroversial things but to "tell it as we see it" and thus at times its comments may be irritating, unpleasant or embarrassing."

Canadian Environmental Advisory Council
Conseil consultatif canadien de l'environnement

Ottawa, Canada
K1A 0H3

September 12, 1985

Minister of the Environment
Ottawa, Canada

Dear Minister:

I am pleased to submit to you the Review of Activities of the Canadian Environmental Advisory Council for the 1984-85 fiscal year. This Review documents the main activities of Council during the 12-month period from April 1, 1984 to March 31, 1985.

Council addressed a wide range of topics during the year, a number of them prompted by your requests for advice. There was a particular focus on the field of environment-economy relationships. As stated in this report: "Council recognized that understanding and accepting the interactions between economic performance and environmental quality are fundamental to an improved stewardship of the natural environment, and, therefore, part of the solution to all environmental problems."

Council pursued the objective of gaining wider understanding and acceptance through a variety of activities. They are described in this report, but I would like to draw your attention to one in particular: the study which was completed at year-end on environment-economy linkages. The study will help to chart a future course of action by Council. Of even more importance, we hope that it will aid and encourage many groups, agencies and organizations in their search for greater understanding. This vital area of interaction demands both individual and collective effort by all concerned, because it affects not only environmental quality and economic performance, but also the health and well-being of all Canadians.

Yours sincerely,

Tom Beck

Tom Beck
Chairman

Canada

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COUNCIL OPERATIONS

Membership

The policy of stressing the appointment of new members rather than extending the appointments of current members created another year of change in the make-up of the Council. The fiscal year began with nine members serving on Council. Although membership had dropped to 7 early in the year, it grew to 10 by year-end. In total, five new members were appointed, while four either completed their terms, or resigned.

Mr. Tom Beck of Calgary, Alberta, continued as Chairman through 1984-85. Dr. P.F.W. McLoughlin of Comox, British Columbia, completed his appointment as Vice-chairman. Appointment of a new Vice-chairman was pending at year-end.

Other members who completed their service on Council during 1984-85 were:

Ms. Susan Holtz,
Ecology Action Centre,
Halifax, Nova Scotia;

Mr. Trevor G. Jeanes, Vice-President,
Woodlands, Balco Industries Ltd.,
Kamloops, British Columbia; and

Dr. T. Hancock,
M.D., Associate Medical Officer of Health,
Department of Public Health,
Toronto, Ontario.

The following members were appointed to Council during the year:

Dr. Shirley A.M. Conover, Senior Scientist,
Environmental Division, Hardy Associates Ltd.,
Dartmouth, Nova Scotia;

Mr. John L. Fryer, National President,
National Union of Provincial Government Employees,
Ottawa, Ontario;

Dr. Joseph A.F. Gardner, Professor of Wood Sciences,
Faculty of Forestry, University of British Columbia,
Vancouver, British Columbia;

Dr. Lorne Giroux, Professor of Law,
University of Laval, Laval, Québec; and

Dr. Stanley J. Rowe, Professor, Department of
Crop Sciences and Plant Ecology, University of
Saskatchewan, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan.

Council recommended more appointments late in 1984-85. These appointments were pending at the end of the fiscal year. A list of members at year-end is included in this Review as Annex A.

Action was also taken during the early months of 1984-85 to follow-up on an initiative started late in the previous year: the preparation of "*Guidelines on Conflict of Interest Situations*". Members felt that because of the circumstances under which they served — as part-time, semi-voluntary advisers with other primary employment and active roles with other organizations — a set of guidelines was needed. Without guidelines, members could find themselves in real, apparent, or potential conflict of interest situations.

The objective of the guidelines was to maintain the credibility of Council as an independent, knowledgeable body by avoiding not only the reality but the perception of conflict of interest. While the guidelines were considered useful, it appeared that they would be particularly valuable for new and potential members.

The guidelines that were adopted by Council and approved by the Minister appear in this Review as Annex B.

Meetings

Council again held a limited number of meetings because of budgetary restraint. Five full meetings of Council were held — all in Ottawa. The usual practice of holding at least one meeting outside of Ottawa to gain first-hand knowledge of local circumstances and environmental issues was suspended during 1984-85. The meeting schedule was further limited because plans were cancelled for an Assembly of Environment Councils of Canada.

The Minister met with Council during two of its full meetings and with the Chairman on several occasions.

Six formal executive meetings were held during 1984-85, one of them by conference telephone call. Conference calls were also used occasionally during the year for consultations among members on specific issues or studies.

Publications

One of Council's priorities during 1984-85 was to catch up on the backlog of unpublished Council reports, which dated back as much as three years. By year-end, six reports had been edited and printed, leaving a backlog of only one. The published reports included a review of Council's activities and other studies or documents reflecting the results of efforts by Council as a whole, by an individual member or group

of members, or by independent sources on behalf of Council. The reports did not encompass all Council's effort, a large part of which consisted of oral or written advice to the Minister.

Council published the following reports during 1984-85:

— **Sustainability of Farmed Lands: Current Trends and Thinking,** by C.F. Bentley and L.A. Leskiw.

This is the report of an overview prepared for Council. Reference was made to it in the 1983-84 Review under the title *"An Overview of Current Trends and Thinking Regarding the Sustainability of Farmed Lands, with Emphasis on Western Canada."*

— **Water Management Problems in the Third World: Lessons for Canada,** by Dr. P.F.M. McLoughlin. This report was based on a paper presented by the former Vice-chairman of the Council to a 1982 Environment Week symposium on water.

— **Review of Activities 1981-82; 1982-83.**

Publication of this Review marked a departure from the previous practice of reporting on a biennial and calendar year basis. Future reviews of activities will cover one fiscal year.

The above review included (as annexes) extracts from, or summaries of, several reports that had been published or prepared during the period. It also contained one special article that did not appear in other published Council documents: *"A Perspective on the Canadian Environmental Advisory Council"*, by Council's former Associate Secretary, Dr. J.K. Fraser.

— **Report of the Eighth Assembly of Environment Councils of Canada.**

The Report summarized the activities and discussions of the 1983 Assembly including, in particular, discussions entitled *"The Role of Councils"* and *"The Public Role in Setting and Enforcing Environmental Standards"*.

— **Selected Papers from Assemblies of the Environment Councils of Canada 1975-1980.**

CEAC published this compendium at the urging of participating provincial environment councils. It featured papers selected from the first five assemblies or annual meetings of the federal and provincial environment councils. The report included the following papers:

— *Some Environmental Considerations in the Planning, Construction and Maintenance of Northern Roads with Relevance to the Mackenzie Valley Highway"*, by Ian McTaggart-Cowan;

— *"Reflections on Land Use Issues Facing Canadians"*, by James W. Maxwell;

— *"Environmental Impact Assessment Policies and Procedures: Concerns of 1978"*, by D.S. Caverly;

— *"The Effects of Hydro Development on Rivers"*, by R.W. Newbury; and

— *"The Pittston Proposal — an Exercise in Coastal Zone Management"*, by D.J. Scarrett.

— **Terms of Reference, Canadian Environmental Advisory Council.**

The detailed description of Council's role, developed by Council during 1983-84, was published in a convenient form for reference.

The complete list of Council publications to date is included in this Review as Annex C.

Secretariat

No changes occurred during the year in the two-person Secretariat, which Environment Canada supplied to support Council's operation. The Secretariat continued to give priority to providing both administrative services and information and research in support of activities or studies undertaken by individual members and Council as a whole.

Editing, design, and printing arrangements for the six Council reports required a major effort during the year, as did efforts to develop a flexible approach to work-planning that would reflect rapidly changing priorities, and be in tune with the Secretariat's limited resources.

COUNCIL STUDIES AND REVIEWS

This section of the Review contains summaries of Council's activities that were either of particular significance, or to which Council has devoted a considerable part of its time and resources. Some of the activities reported here were undertaken at the request of the Minister, while others reflect Council's initiatives. Some topics to which Council either devoted less time or were of lower priority are grouped under the heading "Other". A number of subjects that appeared on Council's agenda, but which were less important or did not require specific action by Council are not included.

Environment-Economy Relationships

This broad subject continued through 1984-85 as the first priority in Council's program. Council recognized that understanding and accepting the interactions between economic performance and environmental quality are fundamental to an improved stewardship of the natural environment and that such understanding and acceptance are therefore part of the solution to all environmental problems. Within Council's own program, members frequently noted the relevance of the relationships between the economy and the environment to the specific issue under discussion.

Council's main approach to this subject has been to try to better understand the relationships and, where possible, to encourage and support efforts by others. Council's main initiative during the year was to commission a study on specific environment-economy linkages. Members became interested in this focus as a result of two workshops held in 1983-84 which served as a first step in exploring these linkages. Late in 1984-85, when funds could be allocated, Council undertook a study to identify "the known, significant linkages between environmental quality and economic performance". Council felt that this study would both enable discussion to move from a broad conceptual or policy level to specifics and, subsequently, make it possible to identify case studies in existing literature that would provide actual dollar cost or value figures in relation to some of the specific linkages.

The study was completed at year-end, and further action in 1985-86 will be based on Council's assessment of the findings of the study.

Council was involved in a number of other activities concerning environment-economy relationships during the year. They included:

- participation by the Chairman in a consultation meeting on the environment and the economy (This meeting was called by the Minister and included representatives from industry, labour, public interest groups, and universities.);
- initial contact with the World Commission on Environment and Development, including discussion of the Council's possible involvement in its work;
- support for a symposium on *"The Economics of Environmental Protection"*, sponsored by the Alberta Chapter of the Canadian Society of Environmental Biologists; and
- briefings on related projects, including the meeting of Environment Ministers of Summit Countries; the Conference on Environment and Economics, sponsored by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development; and the *"Economy, Jobs and the Environment"* consultation project, developed by the Niagara Institute and Environment Canada.

Reports on two other related Council activities follow.

Consultations with Industry

As it began to explore environment-economy relationships, Council recognized the need to focus both on the adequacy of consultation among government, industry, and the public on environmental issues, and on ways in which a greater environmental leadership role by industry could be encouraged. It was also noted that the original proposal to establish CEAC drew attention to the need for improved communication between diverse groups in society, specifically groups representing industry and those representing environmental protection.

A number of activities related to this topic were undertaken in 1984-85. The Chairman attended a consultation meeting with leaders of industry that the Minister hosted. The Chairman also participated in the World Industry Conference in Versailles, France, on Environmental Management. This conference was jointly sponsored by the United Nations Environment Program and the private sector. In addition, Council identified a number of environmental leaders in industry and recommended industry representation at environmental workshops and meetings.

Initial planning was done for a CEAC-sponsored workshop or conference to explore improved industry participation in environment-related consultations, and ways in which to inspire a greater leadership role by business and industry. It was noted that there is increasing evidence of industries going beyond the minimum legal requirements for environmental protection and that these examples of enlightened self-interest deserve greater recognition.

One small informal meeting was held late in the year with representatives of the Canadian Manufacturers Association. This meeting laid the groundwork for further joint efforts by CEAC and the Association in 1985-86.

Royal Commission on the Economic Union and Development Prospects for Canada

Council had submitted a brief to the Commission in 1983-84 that commented on economic policy from an environmental perspective. The brief noted that a direct linkage exists between the long-term health of the economy and the environment and made some preliminary recommendations to the Commission.

Plans had been made to follow-up in 1984-85 with studies to provide more detailed recommendations to the Commission. Unfortunately, Council's efforts had to be scaled down because of other priorities. Several members and former members submitted briefs as individuals.

In response to the Commission's initial report, "*Challenges and Choices*", and to the Commission's request for further views, Council confirmed its views on the relationships between a healthy economy, a healthy society, and the quality of the environment. Council also noted that the mounting evidence on the importance of these relationships would be examined at the world level through organizations including the World Commission on Environment and Development, and it urged that the Commission also examine the evidence.

Science Policy

There had been a periodic concern among Council members regarding the adequacy of scientific capability in Environment Canada, and CEAC had periodically reviewed or commented on science capability or performance. This concern was highlighted again in 1983-84, and Council undertook to update earlier assessments. This work was completed late in 1984-85.

Council expressed concern that the scientific programs of Environment Canada have been eroded over the years and that this erosion applies to both in-house and externally-supported programs. Council is also concerned that government commitments to reverse the decline of Canadian science in general need to be applied to the environmental sciences because of the demands which it appears will be placed on them. It was noted that many environmental issues are complex and poorly understood, and that access to scientific knowledge is essential. One example offered was the movement of toxic chemicals in waters and soils, their sources, rate of migration through the food chain, and their individual and collective effect on human health and the environment.

Council emphasized that environmental research is part of Environment Canada's mandate; that significant improvements in environmental research can be made, even in times of fiscal restraint; and that steps could be taken to develop more effective links with the provinces, industry and the universities.

Environmental Non-government Organizations (ENGOs)

Late in 1983-84 the Minister asked the Council to review the Public Consultation Policy, particularly in relation to voluntary public interest groups. The review was completed in 1984-85. CEAC originally played a key role in organizing the first national meetings of the voluntary public interest groups. Recently, it has served both as an adviser to the Minister on ENGOs and on public consultation in general, and as an informal adviser to the ENGO National Steering Committee.

The Chairman and Vice-chairman were invited to attend the ENGO National Meeting and the Department's National Public Consultation Meeting. Council also reviewed reports and studies which had been prepared by other sources. Council made a number of observations in its review, including the need for effective two-way communication between the Minister and the Department and voluntary public interest groups. Council noted that these groups are not homogenous, that they have little hierarchical structure and, therefore, that the most effective communication will likely occur at the regional level. Council also urged that consultation with the groups be carried out continuously and made recommendations on appropriate funding.

Council pointed out that although it had reviewed only relationships with voluntary public interest groups, equal weight should be given to relationships with other sectors.

Drinking Water Quality

It had been apparent that water issues generally would be among the major environmental issues of the 1980s and that drinking water quality might become the major issue of concern in the eyes of the public. Council was represented at a conference on drinking water quality and, subsequently, stated its views.

In particular, Council urged that there be effective public consultation in setting standards or guidelines for the quality of drinking water. It noted that "everyone is at the end of a pipe or at the top of a well which delivers drinking water", and that members of the public, therefore, need to both understand the conditions that affect drinking water quality, and have an opportunity to express their views on the level and type of risk (if any) that they are prepared to accept.

Council also noted that given the division in responsibility among departments and between the federal and provincial governments, there was a particular need for co-ordination to avoid duplication of effort.

Nuclear Winter

While Council did not study the subject extensively, it has been included in this section of the report to reflect Council's view that the indicated after-effects of a nuclear war represent the greatest potential environmental hazard facing mankind.

Council was briefed on related work being undertaken by Environment Canada, on progress by the Royal Society of Canada and, ultimately, on the final report prepared by the Society. Council complimented the Minister on the decision to provide copies of the report to all Members of Parliament, and offered to participate in any follow-up activity.

Role of Council

Although Council had completed a review of its role during the previous year and a detailed statement of its terms of reference had been approved, discussions on this subject continued in 1984-85. Preparation of the detailed statement of Council's terms of reference may have contributed to a desire to explore alternative or broadened roles for it.

In response to interest expressed by the Minister in a further review of Council's role, CEAC obtained and reviewed background information on other national environmental councils, including those of the Netherlands and Brazil. The Council serving the Netherlands was of particular interest to members of CEAC, and a summary of information on that Council has been included in this Review as Annex D.

Environment Canada also undertook a separate review of the role of Council. Discussions between the Chairman and the Deputy Minister focused on the relationship between the Council and the Department, including the provision of adequate resources for Council's secretariat. Plans were made for a joint meeting of Council and the Department's Senior Management Committee.

Northern National Parks

In view of the planned observance of Canada's National Parks Centennial in 1985, Council brought forward again for attention the statement that it had prepared in the previous year, and which was developed from a study on the economic value of parks. It was Council's view that action should be taken to complete the national park system in the Yukon and Northwest Territories during 1985 by bringing the necessary land withdrawals to the stage of park reserves. Council noted that the key sites identified as potential national parks involve less than 5% of the land area. It also noted that major expenditures would not be required to establish them as park reserves and that the new parks would ultimately bring direct economic benefit through the tourism industry. The statement had been previously published in Council's 1983-84 Review.

Council was involved in a number of other activities related to national parks, including a workshop on planning for the future of parks. The Chairman participated in the workshop, which focused on the course of action for the next 100 years.

Sustainability of Agricultural Soils

Members of Council had been concerned for several years over indications of serious land use and soil degradation problems that could affect the future productivity of Canada's agricultural lands. CEAC's concerns were shared by the provincial councils, and in 1982 Council commissioned the first of two studies — *an overview of current trends and thinking*. This study was followed by a second in-depth one launched in 1983-84. The second study was completed in 1984-85, except for some minor revisions. An executive summary of the study report, entitled "*Canadian Agricultural Land Base: Quantity and Quality*", by Dr. Robert A. Hedlin and Dr. Daryl Kraft, appears in this Review as Annex E. The report reviewed the areas of concern regarding land use and soil degradation and noted a number of areas for which inadequate information exists and that require further research. Specific areas included: the rate of loss of agricultural land to industrial and urban use; cropping and tillage practices that will reduce soil erosion and maintain the level of organic matter in the soil; the causes and extent of soil salinity; the economics of liming soils to counter acidification; and the influence of technology on agricultural productivity.

State of the Environment Report

Council had been briefed several times in recent years on progress by the Department toward production of a State of Environment Report which would provide information to the public on trends and conditions in Canada's natural environment. Council had strongly supported preparation of such a report.

Because of problems being experienced in completion of the report during 1984-85, Council informally explored alternative funding and production possibilities through universities and the private sector. Members also reviewed draft material for the report and for a related document, "*Human Activities and the Environment*", being produced by Statistics Canada. Council discussed both reports with private sector representatives, and provided advice to Environment Canada and Statistics Canada on the potential demand and marketing of the reports.

Environmental Health Research Priorities

The National Health Research and Development Program noted that environmental health research was a current area of interest and requested advice on future research priorities.

Council responded by identifying two general requirements and several particular areas toward which research should

be directed. Council urged that research be directed toward anticipated problems, not exclusively toward well- known "popular" problems because many threats to human health are cumulative, and time is required to reverse the processes (if indeed they are reversible). Also recommended was effective integration of research efforts, not only to make the best use of available research funds, but to reduce the time required to identify incipient environmental health concerns.

Particular areas that Council identified included: the long-term health effects of exposure to low doses of multiple chemicals, including hazards through drinking water; the effects of acid rain, including indirect effects through heavy metals in recipient soil and water; the increasing problems of indoor air quality; causes of breakdowns in the human immune system; the threats posed by inadequate sewage treatment; the possible effects on human health of multiple recycling; and the potential threat from new food additives and processes.

Federal Policy on Wildlife

At the request of departmental officials, Council undertook reviews of the new draft "*Federal Policy on Wildlife*". Council was generally supportive, and considered that the draft policy contained a number of fresh ideas. Council supported in particular the use of the "*World Conservation Strategy*" as an underlying principle for the new policy.

Council supported the inclusion of plants in the definition of wildlife because doing so reflects an ecosystem approach to conservation and focuses on man's use of the biosphere rather than on the narrow and more limited concept of managing wildlife populations.

Several members made suggestions on areas of the policy requiring elaboration or clarification, including native hunting of wildlife, more specific definition of endangered species, and the keeping or raising of wild animals in captivity. Council also urged that more specific attention be given to methods of implementing the policy.

Inquiry on Federal Water Strategy

In line with its view that water concerns would be among the major environmental issues of the 1980s, Council maintained contact during the year with the Inquiry, which had been appointed by the Minister. Members drew to the attention of the Inquiry the report on water management, published earlier by Council, and suggested possible participants in the Inquiry's hearings.

Council opted for meeting with the Inquiry rather than presenting a formal brief. That meeting took place in February 1985 and was organized as part of a regular meeting of Council. At that point, the Inquiry had met with provincial representatives, had held public hearings, and had commissioned a number of studies. The Inquiry briefed Council on the major concerns that had emerged through the public hearing process, and Council noted a number of issues from its perspective. The discussion focused mainly on the theme of public advocacy in connection with water management, and public input to the process of developing water policy.

Enforcement Policy

In a discussion with the Minister on inadequacies in enforcement policy and practice, Council was asked to identify specific instances of non-compliance with environmental protection regulations. Members undertook to gather relevant data from several geographic areas and to review the work of the Law Reform Commission and other recent studies such as the one undertaken by the Environmental Council of Alberta. By year-end, the project was nearing completion.

In undertaking this study, Council recognized that there might be weaknesses in Environment Canada's mandate and in its specific legislative authorities. However, members felt that those weaknesses could best be highlighted by examining specific cases of non-compliance. Council also noted that it does not advocate enforcement of regulations as the only means of implementing environmental standards and requirements, but that laws should not be established which cannot, or will not be enforced.

Public Opinion Polls

Departmental officials briefed Council on a variety of current public opinion polls that related, at least in part, to environmental matters. The results confirmed Council's impression that environmental issues were maintaining their position as one of the major areas of concern among Canadians. The polls indicated that Canadians were unwilling to trade environmental protection for economic growth. In one poll, although battling the deficit was thought to be a priority by 88% of the respondents, battling air and water pollution was given a priority by, respectively, 96% and 94%. In another survey, a majority of respondents (64%) gave higher priority to environmental protection than to economic growth.

Members of Council felt that better use should be made of the results of public opinion polls in order to communicate public views to decision-makers, and that in-depth examination of some issues should be made through public opinon surveys.

Program Review

Issues related to the initial program cuts applied to Environment Canada were raised with Council by a number of groups. It was Council's view that it could not play a useful role in relation to program reductions that had already been made, except to ensure that the Minister was made aware of some of the key public concerns. Council also looked at alternative ways of providing some of the environmental services that had been dropped.

Council subsequently focused on the upcoming review of programs by the DOE Self-evaluation Study Team, appointed under the Ministerial Task Force on Program Review.

Other

Northern Priorities

During the early months of 1984-85, Council continued work on a proposal for developing *"a sustainable northern economy from an environmental perspective"*. Council provided the Minister with some related documentation. After assessing progress being made through economic development agreements and reviewing plans for upcoming conferences and other initiatives, it was agreed that further work on the subject by Council might lead to duplication.

Youth and the Environment

A further discussion with the Minister was held early in the year, to conclude the dialogue started during 1983-84. Council recommended that Environment Canada follow the most cost effective course of action by working through existing organizations and programs that have a youth orientation. Specific reference was made to the Interchange on Canadian Studies Program under the Department of the Secretary of State.

Environmental Assessment and Review Process

After reviewing proposed changes to the Environmental Assessment and Review Process (EARP), Council forwarded to the Minister a copy of recommendations that had been made after a previous review by Council. Council also offered to assist the Minister in any further action required to either streamline the Process, or resolve specific problems.

Hazardous Wastes

Council was briefed on progress and current problems in connection with hazardous waste disposal, particularly the site-selection process for waste disposal facilities. Included among the points raised were: the need to develop public trust; the need to clearly identify wastes that require special storage and treatment; and the advantages of including the disposal costs of waste in order to encourage recycling.

Acid Rain

Council's long-standing interest in the acid rain issue continued during the year. The Council offered to review and comment on specific issues or problems and urged that the federal government move to significantly reduce Canada's contribution to the problem. In Council's view, such a move, while not the ultimate solution, would diminish the impact on human health and the environment, and would strengthen Canada's position in international negotiations.

Environmental Awards and Symbols

Discussions on various categories of environmental awards and symbols carried over from 1983-84. Members had expressed particular concern about a proposal that Council play a major management role in relation to the proposed program. Council had supported some aspects, including regional awards for outstanding environmental performance by business and industry. Council was advised that the proposed program was being reviewed and offered to assist in any re-assessment.

Symposium on Environmental Ethics

Council provided advice on planning for a National Symposium on Environmental Ethics, including recommendations on participants and orientation. The Symposium was rescheduled for June 1985 and was sponsored by the Institute for the Humanities at Simon Fraser University, in co-operation with the University of Waterloo and Environment Canada.

Northern Conservation Task Force

There had been a continuing interest in the work of the Northern Conservation Task Force, appointed by the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs. It was Council's view that the work of this Task Force complemented Environment Canada's initiatives and Council's own proposal on Northern National Parks. Members reviewed and voiced support for the final report of the Task Force.

FUTURE PLANS

On the basis of work underway, and according to other indications, the following subjects will likely be part of Council's 1985-86 program. Additions will be made to the 1985-86 program as issues develop and, in particular, in response to requests by the Minister for advice on matters of current or emerging concern.

Environment-Economy Relationships

Further exploration of the complex interactions between environmental quality and economic performance will likely continue as a priority through 1985-86. In particular, Council will be looking at follow-up to its study on *environment-economy linkages*, in terms of work to be undertaken by Council, and efforts by other groups and organizations to encourage projects.

Consultations with Industry

Council plans to continue its efforts both to improve consultation among gouvernment, industry, and the public on environmental issues, and to explore more ways of encouraging industry to assume a greater environmental leadership role. It is expected that the initial meeting held in 1984-85 with representatives of the Canadian Manufacturers Association will lead to further discussions and, possibly, to a workshop or conference.

Program Review

Council offered to assist in the task force review of Environment Canada's programs. Council expects that it will be called on to provide views to the task force and/or to provide advice to the Minister on implementing some of the task force's recommendations.

State of the Environment Report

Council is looking forward to the publication of Canada's first comprehensive national state of the environment report in 1985-86. A review of the report and consultation with those who will use it is planned in order to provide advice on refinements in the report format and the distribution of future issues.

Enforcement Policy

At year-end, work was nearing completion on the review of inadequacies in Environment Canada's enforcement policy and practice. This review should be finished early in 1985-86 and may require additional follow-up by Council.

Other

There are a number of other subjects on which Council action in 1985-86 is possible, but uncertain. They include making proposals related to public opinion polls and surveys and reviewing and commenting on several major studies, *e.g., the report of the Inquiry on Federal Water Strategy, the report of the Royal Society on Lead in Gasoline, and the report of the Royal Commission on the Economic Union and Development Prospects for Canada (Macdonald Commission).*

ASSEMBLY OF ENVIRONMENT COUNCILS OF CANADA

An assembly or conference of the federal and provincial environment councils was first organized and hosted by the Canadian Environmental Advisory Council in 1975. Since that time, hosting of the assembly has alternated among the operational councils, and the assemblies have generally been held on an annual basis. The exceptions were 1976 and the current calendar year, 1984. An assembly was planned for the 1984, but had to be cancelled when the host council was unable to make arrangements for it.

During the year, CEAC members discussed problems related to the assemblies with representatives of some of the provincial councils, and Council looked at alternatives to rotational hosting. These alternatives included contractual arrangements with an organization or individual and instituting registration fees to reduce costs to the host council. Members were concerned that the assemblies might be dropped. Therefore, CEAC took the initiative in organizing a meeting of Council charimen. It was hosted by CEAC in Ottawa, in December 1984.

All councils at the meeting strongly supported continuing the assemblies on an annual basis as a means of exchanging information and experience. The chairmen favoured continuing the hosting of the assemblies on a rotational basis among the active councils so that all council would have an opportunity to obtain first-hand knowledge of the environmental problems of other parts of Canada.

A number of details regarding assembly arrangements were discussed and agreement reached. A schedule was arranged for the next three years that would see assemblies hosted by Québec, Alberta, and New Brunswick.

It was agreed that while all councils could propose agenda topics, the final decision should be made by the host council. Topics proposed at the meeting for future assemblies included:

— *transportation of dangerous goods;*

— *solid waste management (including recycling);*

— *ground water contamination;*

— *drinking water quality;*

— *water and regional planning;*

— *tourism and water;*

— *youth and environment;*

— *nuclear waste; and*

— *environment-economy relationships.*

A list of the assemblies held to date and the major topics discussed at each have been included in this Review as Annex F.

ANNEX A

MEMBERSHIP
Canadian Environmental Advisory Council

March, 1985

Mr. T. Beck
Calgary, Alberta
Chairman

Dr. S.A.M. Conover
Hardy Associates Ltd.
Dartmouth, Nova Scotia

Mr. J.L. Fryer
National Union of Provincial
Government Employees
Ottawa, Ontario

Dr. J.A.F. Gardner
University of British Columbia
Vancouver, B.C.

Dr. L. Giroux
University of Laval
Ste-Foy Québec

Mr. B.A. Hubert
Boreal Ecology Services ltd.
Yellowknife, N.W.T.

Mr. M. Hummel
World Wildlife Fund (Canada)
Toronto, Ontario

Madame L.B. Lepage
Fédération des associations
pour la protection de
l'environnement des lacs
Montréal, Québec

Dr. D. MacKay, Professor
University of Toronto
Toronto, Ontario

Dr. J.S. Rowe
University of Saskatchewan
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan

Secretariat

Mr. Max McConnell, Executive Secretary

Dr. E. Fred Roots, Science Advisor

Mrs. Veena Halliwell, Administrative Assistant

Environment Canada
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0H3

Canadian Environmental Advisory Council
GUIDELINES ON CONFLICT OF INTEREST SITUATIONS

In their capacity as confidential advisers to the federal Minister of the Environment, members of Council may find themselves in real, apparent, or potential conflict of interest situations. These situations are created by the conditions under which members serve the Minister: as part-time, semi-voluntary advisers who maintain other primary employment and active roles with other groups and organizations; and who have access to privileged information in oral and written form.

These guidelines were prepared at the request of Council's Executive in order to minimize uncertainly, particularly for new members, and as a means of identifying potential conflict of interest situations when new appointments are being considered. The objective is to maintain the credibility of Council as an independent, knowledgeable, non-partisan body. To maintain that credibility, not only the reality, but the perception of conflict of interest must be avoided.

1. Privileged information which is made available to a member as an adviser to the Minister must not be used, or appear to be used for financial or other direct benefit to the member, his family or associates.

2. No conflict should exist between the private interests (employment, professional group, other organization, etc.) and the member's responsibilities on Council. When a conflict exists or may appear to exist between a member's private interests and a topic under review or discussion by Council which could be interpreted as providing financial or other personal benefits to the member and thus compromise the member's independent, the member must disclose the conflict of interest to the Chairman and/or Council as a whole, and offer to absent himself/herself from Council's action on that subject.

3. Members must not use their influence as Council representatives to advance proposals, either within Council's program of activities or outside of Council, which will be of direct financial or other personal benefit to themselves.

4. As a general rule, members should not initiate contract work with Environment Canada during their term on Council. Any proposals for such contracts should be discussed first with the Chairman and/or Council as a whole, and, if required, with the Minister.

5. Due to Council's non-partisan nature, and its role as a confidential advisory body to the Minister, members, during their term on Council, must not play an active public role on behalf of any political party. In this context, "public role" includes activities such as competing as a party candidate in an election, making public statements on behalf of a party, or equivalent activity. This guideline does not affect what might be considered the usual level of political activity by a citizen, such as holding membership in a political party, or canvassing.

The type of action to be taken on conflict of interest situations will be decided on the merits of each case, and could range from a simple statement of disclosure, through exclusion from discussions on the matter in question, to termination of the member's appointment.

Administration of these guidelines will be a continuing responsibility of the Executive Committee of Council.

August 16, 1984

ANNEX C

LIST OF PUBLICATIONS

Annual Review 1973-1974. Part A — Activities 1973-1974 by Arthur Porter. *Part B — Problems and Priorities in the Canadian Environment* by Pierre Dansereau.

Annual Review 1975. Part A — Activities 1975 by Ian McTaggart-Cowan. *Part B — Significant Canadian Environmental Problems* by J.P. Nowlan.

Annual Review 1976. Part A — Activities 1976. Part B — The State of the Canadian Environment 1976.

Annual Review 1977-1978. Part A — Activities 1977-1978. Part B — The State of the Canadian Environment.

Annual Review 1979-1980. Activities 1979-1980. A Decade of Environmental Concern: Retrospect and Prospect by Donald A. Chant. Environmental Assessment and Review Process: Observations and Recommendations.

Review of Activities 1981-1982; 1982-1983.

Terms of Reference, Canadian Environmental Advisory Council. March 1984.

An Environmental Impact Assessment Process for Canada, Council Report No. 1, February 1974.

An Environmental Ethic — Its Formulation and Implications. Council Report No. 2, January 1975. By Norman H. Morse.

Harmony and disorder in the Canadian Environment. Occasional Paper No. 1. By Pierre Dansereau *Council Report No. 3, 1975.*

Environmental Aspects of Nuclear Power Development in Canada. Occasional Paper No. 2. By H.E. Duckworth, H.W. Arthur Porter and J.S. Rogers. *Council Report No. 4, 1977.*

Towards an Environmental Ethic, March 1977. By D.A. Chant.

Report of the Second joint Meeting of Environmental Advisory Councils. May 1977, Fort San, Saskatchewan. Council Report No. 5, March 1978. Produced in collaboration with the Saskatchewan Environmental Advisory Council.

The Management of Estuarine Resources in Canada. Council Report No. 6, March 1978. By Irving K. Fox and J.P. Nowlan.

Report of the First and Second Meetings of Public Interest Groups with the Canadian Environmental Advisory Council. Council Report No. 7, May 1978.

Ecotoxicity: Responsibilities and Opportunities. Council Report No. 8, August 1979. By Ross H. Hall and Donald A. Chant.

Report of a Meeting between the Public Interest Groups and the Canadian Environmental Advisory Council, May 26-27, 1980. Council Report No. 9, April 1981.

A New Approach to Pest Control in Canada. Council Report No. 10, July 1981. By Ross H. Hall.

Wildlife Conservation issues in Northern Canada. Council Report No. 11, October 1981. By Ian McTaggart-Cowan.

Water Management Problems in the Third World: Lessons for Canada. Council Report No. 12, March 1983. By Peter F.M. McLoughlin.

Report of the Eighth Assembly of Environment Councils of Canada. Council Report No. 13, May 1984.

Selected Papers from Assemblies of the Environment Councils of Canada 1975-1980. Council Report No. 14, March 1985.

Sustainability of Farmed Lands: Current Trends and Thinking. Council Report No. 15, March 1985. By C.F. Bentley and L.A. Leskiw.

THE CENTRAL COUNCIL FOR ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION IN THE NETHERLANDS

Introduction

Environmental protection is not only the concern of the government: it affects the community and its individual members too. In order to conduct a satisfactory environmental policy it is essential for the government to hear the views of everyone who is closely involved with developments in this domain. The Provisional Central Council for Environmental Protection was set up in 1974, and the word 'Provisional' was dropped from its title in May 1981 when the relevant section of the Environmental Protection (General Provisions) Act came into force.

Composition

A considerable number of organisations are represented on the Council. These include environmental organisations, employers' organisations, trade unions, the water boards and the various levels of government — provinces, regions and municipalities. There are also representatives from the Industrial Board for Agriculture, the Consumers' Association and womens' organisations. The Minister of Housing, Physical Planning and Environment has also appointed a number of experts to sit on the Council in a personal capacity.

Responsibilities and methods

The Council's most important task is to advise the Government, and particularly the Minister of Housing, Physical Planning and Environment, either on th Minister's own policy area or on environmental matters which fall primarily or even entirely under the responsibility of other ministers. For example, the Council has made recommendations on energy policy and on earth removal.

The Minister asks the Council for advice on all bills relating to environmental protection. The Council can also make recommendations on its own initiative. All recommendations are drawn up by Council committees, which may also include representatives of groups not represented on the Council and external experts on the subject in question. The definitive recommendations are finalised by the Council at a public meeting. After being submitted to the Minister they are brought to the attention of Parliament by the Council and usually published afterwards. If the Council cannot agree upon an unanimous recommendation the minority view is also included.

As well as making recommendations the Council is also responsible for making an annual survey of the state of affairs in the environment in the Netherlands. This is presented to the Minister of Housing, Physical Planning and Environment, but it also serves to keep organisations and interested members of the public informed. In form and content it is therefore aimed at a wide public, and as such published in book form by the Government Printing Office.

Finally, the Council regards it as one of its responsibilities to encourage more people to think about certain aspects of environmental policy; this is done by holding annual one-day discussions or seminars.

ANNEX E

CANADIAN AGRICULTURAL LAND BASE: QUANTITY AND QUALITY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

There are many individuals involved in the management of agricultural land and the production of food. These include the men and women on farms; those engaged in agricultural research; those responsible for the many aspects of agricultural education; and those who manufacture the machinery, agricultural chemicals and other inputs utilized in crop and animal production.

These people constitute a team whose task has not been an easy one. It has often been made more difficult by the fact that our society has occasionally failed to understand food production problems or to provide the necessary support. In spite of the difficulties this team has achieved a remarkable degree of success in producing crops of high quality and in the maintenance of Canadian soil resources.

This is not to say the agricultural industry does not have to be concerned with maintaining a productive land base. The areas of concern are summarized below.

I. Amount of Agricultural Land — in eastern Canada the area of improved agricultural land has decreased by 2.5 million hectares or 25 percent since 1941. In all eastern provinces disappearance of land from agricultural use was chiefly because crop production was unprofitable. Much of this land has reverted to forestry and hence could be returned to agriculture should circumstances dictate.

In some regions located in Ontario and Quebec a significant portion of the improved land removed from agriculture was converted to urban uses. Much of this land was of high agricultural quality, suited to specialized crop and fruit production. Because of the unique soil and climatic attributes of these areas the actual and potential Canadian production of some crops is endangered.

The extent to which past industrial expansion and population growth consumed agricultural land is not precisely known. Without this information it is difficult to forecast future land conversion rates even if population and economic growth could be predicted accurately. It also makes it difficult to develop appropriate policies to deal with this problem.

II. Soil Degradation or Deterioration — The areas of concern are recognized but an accurate assessment of their seriousness is difficult. This is because such an assessment requires an appreciation of both the intensity of the problem and the land area affected.

1. Salinity

It has commonly been stated that the area of saline soils is spreading rapidly. An examination of the information supporting this point of view fails to substantiate it. Therefore, we were forced to conclude that spread of salinity is not rapid or widespread. The existing area of saline soils however is a continuing concern. Initiatives should be undertaken to more fully understand the problem with a view of improving agricultural productivity of these soils.

2. Soil Acidity

This is a major problem in much of the agricultural region of Canada. It can be effectively dealt with through the application of finely ground limestone. On very acid soils the initial cost, which is commonly in the range of $200.00 to $400.00 per hectare, represents a major investment that farmers may find difficult to afford. Once soils have been adequately limed the average annual cost of replacing the lime lost as a result of natural and main-induced acidification processes is normally less than $10.00 per hectare. For most soils the cost is small relative to the returns obtained through increased crop production.

3. Loss of Organic Matter

Cultivation usually results in a decline in the amount of organic matter in the soil. This in turn increases susceptibility to erosion leading to a further loss in organic matter. On most soils the organic-matter content has stabilized at a new level. The adequacy of this new level varies depending on the actual amount of organic matter and its quality. These in turn are related to the cropping and tillage practices used.

4. Soil Erosion

A continuing concern is loss of topsoil by water erosion in all parts of Canada and wind erosion on much of the Canadian prairies.

Concerns regarding erosion are two-fold. Erosion results in reduced crop yields and leads to an increase in the cost of production. These costs are almost entirely reflected in a reduction in net farm income. On many farms they mean the difference between a profitable and an unprofitable enterprise.

Serious erosion is concentrated on a relatively small portion of the agricultural land area. These include wind erosion on sandy soils on the prairies and water erosion on more sloping lands in all parts of Canada. An assessment of the amount

of soil lost in relation to soil type and cropping practices merits more attention than it has received to date.

III. Crop Yields and Cropping Practices — The problems of soil degradation outlined above are related to our cropping and tillage practices.

1. Crop yields have been increasing steadily and there is every reason to expect that Canadian farmers will continue to make effective use of known technology and of new developments as they occur. Increasing yields should not be considered as proof that soil degradation is not serious.

Instead the relationships indicate that to date the degree and extent of soil degradation is insufficient to override the gains in productivity from improved technology.

2. Rotations which include perennial forage as a regular part of the cropping system could reduce erosion and maintain soil organic matter. Such cropping systems are realistic only where there is a larger ruminant livestock population than currently exists, or ever has existed, on most Canadian farms. Thus such rotations have never been widely practiced in Canada. This situation is not likely to change unless new, more profitable markets develop for beef and milk.

3. Most of the cultivated land in Canada continues to be used for annual crop production. Annual crops can be rotated so as to provide many benefits. These include reduced incidence of disease, more effective weed control and, where annual legumes are used, some reduction in nitrogen fertilizer needs.

4. Appropriate practices of crop residue management and conservation tillage could go far to maintain an adequate level of soil organic matter and reduce wind and water erosion. Such practices have not yet received an adequate level of acceptance across Canada. Difficulties associated with their adoption include carryover of disease on crop residues, phytotoxic effects of residues, increased insect damage, reduced effectiveness of soil-incorporated herbicides and difficulty in obtaining a suitable seed bed for small-seeded crops. An intensified research program involving a team approach is needed in order to develop cropping and tillage practices that are effective in reducing erosion and which can be adopted with a minimum of difficulty.

In short what is needed is:

(a) A more careful assessment of the amount of farmland taken by urban expansion is required before new land use regulations are imposed. These reviews are unique to each urban area because of differing economic and regulatory environments.

(b) Intensified studies of the causes and extent of salinity on the Canadian prairies with particular reference to the amount of cultivated land affected and of methods of reducing salt concentration in affected areas.

(c) A study of the economics of liming acid soils. The objective would be to develop programs and practices that make liming more attractive to farmers.

(d) Intensified research on conservation tillage systems so as to develop practices which are acceptable to farmers and which are, at the same time, effective in maintaining soil organic matter and reducing soil loss by wind and water erosion.

(e) An intensive investigation of agricultural productivity with respect to the influence of technological developments since 1950. This study should not only address the effect of technology on crop production but also on livestock production and food processing.

ANNEX F

ASSEMBLIES OF THE ENVIRONMENT COUNCILS OF CANADA

Locations, sponsors, and main agenda topics.

1975, Ottawa, Ontario, Canadian Environmental Advisory Council

1) Land Use Planning and Management
2) Public Participation in Government Decision-Making
3) Communication
4) Environmental Education
5) The Urban Environment
6) Environmental Quality Indices
7) Population and its Distribution as an Environmental Problem

1976 — No assembly held

1977, Fort San, Saskatchewan, Saskatchewan Environmental Advisory Council

1) Land Use Issues Facing Canadians
2) Nuclear Development and the Environment
3) Environmental Impact Assessment Policy
4) Role of Public Involvement in Environmental Planning and Policy

1978, Brudenell, Prince Edward Island, Prince Edward Island Environmental Advisory Council

1) P.E.I. Institute of Man and Resources on Alternative Renewable Resources
2) Issues and Concerns of Participating Councils with respect to Alternative Renewable Resources
3) An Overview Presentation on Land Use
4) Environmental Impact Assessment
5) Environmental Aspects of Agriculture
6) Toxic Chemicals
7) Public Participation

1979, Hecla Island, Manitoba, Manitoba Environmental Council

1) Federal Strategy with respect to Hazardous Materials
2) The Effects on Health from Hazardous Materials
3) Pesticides in Water
4) Disposal of Hazardous Wastes
5) Legal and Political Implications of the Use of Hazardous Materials
6) Provincial Implementation and Action on the use of Hazardous Materials
7) Economic and Environmental Factors For and Against Hydro-Electric Schemes
8) Overview of Interprovincial Power Grids and Environmental Consequences
9) Effects of Hydro Development on Rivers

1980, St. Andrews, New Brunswick, Environmental Council of New Brunswick

1) Land Use Practices
2) Shore Zone Management
3) Long Range Transport of Air Pollution
4) The Environmental Impact and Implications of the Proposed Pittston Refinery at Easport, Marine

1981, Banff, Alberta, Environment Council of Alberta

1) Global 2000, The Canadian Perspective
2) Incremental Environmental Disturbance
3) Security of the Agricultural Land Base
4) Role of the Public in Government Decision Making on Environmental Matters
5) Ecological Reserves
6) A Compendium on Provincial Approaches to Environmental Legislation and Regulation

1982, Digby, Nova Scotia, Nova Scotia Environmental Control Council

1) Surface Mining in Nova Scotia and Environmental Issues
2) Environmental Impacts of Renewable Energy Sources
3) Environmental Education
4) Global 2000 — Panel Discussion

1983, Ottawa, Ontario, Canadian Environmental Advisory Council

1) The Public Role in Setting and Enforcing Environmental Standards
2) Role of Environmental Councils

1984 — No Assembly held